

IN THE CLAIMS

Claims 1-20. (Canceled).

Claim 21. (Currently Amended) A method for enabling differential visualization on a display of a plurality of aspects of a telecommunication network, said method comprising the steps of:

presenting a background image representation of at least a first of the aspects of the telecommunication network; and

presenting a foreground image representation of at least a second of the aspects of the telecommunication network over the background image representation, said second of the aspects being user-selectable.

Claim 22. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 21, wherein the background image representation is generated from an information set associated with the telecommunication network such that the background image representation contains less than a complete visual representation of the telecommunications network topology.

Claim 23. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 21, wherein the background image representation is a combination of a plurality of unselected views of the telecommunication network and wherein the foreground image representation is ~~a at least~~ at least one selected views of the telecommunication network.

Claim 24. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23, wherein the step of presenting the foreground image representation comprises displaying the at least one selected view in a distinguishable fashion from the combination of unselected network views forming the background image representation to enable the at least one selected view of the telecommunication network to be viewed in context of information contained in the background image representation.

Claim 25. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23, further comprising the step of moving at least one of the unselected views of the telecommunication network from at least one of the background image representation to the foreground image representation, and the step of

moving at least one of the selected views of the telecommunication network from the foreground image representation to the background image representation.

Claim 26. (Currently Amended) The method of ~~claim 24~~claim 25, wherein the step of moving is performed upon receipt of input from an user of a network management tool.

Claim 27. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 21, wherein the background image representation is a reference view of a base model representation; and wherein the foreground image representation is an overlay view of the base model representation.

Claim 28. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 21, wherein the background image representation is grayed out relative to the foreground image representation.

Claim 29. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 21, wherein the first aspect is a physical network topology and wherein the second aspect is a logical network topology.

Claim 30. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 21, wherein the background image representation and foreground image representation allow simultaneous displays of representations of multiple network technologies available on the telecommunication network.

Claim 31. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 21, further comprising the step of enabling a combination of the background and foreground images to be visible via a Graphical User Interface (GUI) of a network management tool.

Claim 32. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 31, wherein the first aspects and second aspect are user-selectable from the plurality of aspects of the telecommunication network via the GUI.

Claim 33. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 21, wherein the first aspect represents physical devices in the telecommunication network and wherein the second aspect represents attributes of the physical devices.

Claim 34. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 21, wherein the foreground image representation is a composite of multiple individual ~~representation~~ representations of one or more of the aspects of the telecommunication network.

Claim 35. (Currently Amended) A network management tool, comprising:

a display;

a Graphical User Interface (GUI) available via a window on said display, said graphical user interface being configured to provide a network manager with an ability to simultaneously display a reference view of a managed telecommunication network and an user-selectable overlay view of the managed telecommunication network in a distinguishable fashion in said window.

Claim 36. (Previously Presented) The network management tool of claim 35, wherein the reference view and overlay view together comprise a plurality of user selectable aspects of the managed telecommunication network, and wherein the GUI is configured such that the user may choose which aspects should be used to generate at least one of the reference view and the overlay view.

Claim 37. (Previously Presented) The network management tool of claim 35, wherein the overlay view is displayed in relief relative to the reference view.

Claim 38. (Previously Presented) The network management tool of claim 35, wherein the reference view is a view of a base model representation of a network layout containing information about network devices and attributes of the network devices.

Claim 39. (Currently Amended) The network management tool of claim 38, wherein the base model representation is generated from ~~an network~~ a network information set containing complete information about the underlying telecommunication network, and wherein the base model representation represents less than all of the information contained in the network information set.

Claim 40. (Previously Presented) The network management tool of claim 39, wherein the GUI enables multiple versions of the base model representation to be generated from different aspects of the information contained in the telecommunication information under the control of the user.

Claim 41. (Currently Amended) The network management tool of claim 39, wherein the GUI enables instructions to be input from a user to enable the user to alter the appearance of the base model representation by selecting different subsets of information from the ~~telecommunication~~ network information set to be used to generate the base model representation.

Claim 42. (Currently Amended) The network management tool of claim 41, wherein the ~~telecommunication~~ network information set comprises physical topography information associated with network elements on the telecommunication network, logical interconnection information associated with the telecommunication network, status information associated with the network elements, and performance attributes associated with the network elements.

Claim 43. (Previously Presented) The network management tool of claim 35, wherein the display is touch sensitive such that the display is an input device.

Claim 44. (Currently Amended) A method for presenting a visual representation on a display of a telecommunication network layout, said method comprising the steps of:

obtaining ~~a~~ an information set containing information relevant to the telecommunication network layout;

generating a representation of at least a portion of the information set, said representation having a background image portion indicative of at least a first aspect of the telecommunication network layout, said background image being derived from at least a first data subset of the information set, and said representation having a foreground image indicative of at least a second aspect of the telecommunication network layout, said foreground image being user-selectable and derived from at least a second data subset of the information set.

Claim 45. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 44, wherein the background image ~~is a~~
~~presented~~ is presented in a diluted color format and wherein the foreground image is presented in
a saturated color format.

Claim 46. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 44, wherein at least one of the first and
second data subsets are ~~user~~ selectable by an user to enable the user to control the appearance of
at least one of the foreground image and background image.